



CASE STUDY:

Affane-Cappoquin GAA & Camogie Club, Co. Waterford



The challenge we faced:

Our club is surrounded by water – we have two rivers flowing beside the club ground. We are below the level of high tide and we're very aware of having an impact on the rivers and the rivers having an impact on us – we've had some historic cases of flooding.

When we joined the Green Club programme it was an opportunity for us to look a bit more at our use of water and at our relationship with the water around us. It was also an opportunity for Cappoquin Camogie club and Affane-Cappoquin GAA to partner on a club project.

The solution we identified:

We decided to focus on three key areas, all linked to the theme of Water:

- Auditing our current usage and our environmental impact.
- Identifying ways of saving or recycling water.
- Promoting awareness of conservation and of our local river systems.

We set up a core Water Group for planning and contacted our Local Authority Waters Programme (LAWPro) Community Officer for advice. She came out to the club and walked the grounds with us as we drew up our plans. We also used online water maps to help in our planning.

The actions we took:

- We contracted a local plumber to install new water-saving devices in the dressing rooms, to automatically shut off water supplies to cisterns, showers and taps when the dressing rooms are not in use.
- We installed a water meter, supplied by the county council, so that we could monitor our water use.
- Our groundsman repaired a leaking tap which was found to be losing c.100 litres in a twelve-hour period (measured with our new water meter).
- We registered our two public-access drinking water taps with Refill.ie
- We installed a water butt to collect rainwater from a section of our roof space.
- Waterford Sustainable Living and artist Aga Krym produced a fantastic moss mural to promote water awareness and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). This is located pitchside, on the pedestal of an old scoreboard.
- We installed water and biodiversity awareness signage around our walkway as well as a number of benches, which we upcycled.
- The LAWPro Community Officer took local school children on a water awareness walk of the grounds and showed them how to use kick-sampling to monitor life in the river.
- We planted native trees around the ground – a mixture of oak, Italian alder, silver and common birch, scots pine and hazel.





The impact our project had:

- Installing the water meter helped us make savings by identifying leaks and where taps were left running. It also helps us monitor our usage against our bills.
- Our moss mural and the signage around the club has raised awareness of the heritage and value of the rivers and of the importance of water to the club.
- It has been great to engage with local schools to help them learn about local water heritage and to engage with the rivers and the biodiversity in the area.
- Our walkways have been enhanced with the new signage, benches and the additional tree-planting.
- The club water project was awarded a highly commended Waters & Communities Award in the 2022 Tidy Towns competition.

The secret to our success:

We started with small and simple actions and took it steadily, step-by-step. We started by identifying small things we could do and built from there.

We had a core team to lead the project and received valuable advice and guidance from our LAWPro Community Officer.

Who we partnered with:

- Our LAWPro Community Officer gave great support and guidance.
- We're very grateful to Jen Harris at Waterford and Sustainable Living Ireland and artist Aga Krym for our striking moss mural.
- Many people within the club gave of their time – huge thanks to them all.
- We engaged with local schools on awareness initiatives.

Funding we received:

- We received funding from a LAWPRO, through the Green Club programme.
- We received trees from Coillte, Trees on the Land and Easy Treesie.
- We received a water meter from the county council.

The next steps for the clubs:

- We hope to plant some wildflowers in various locations in spring, especially along the walkway and in areas such as the margins of the plantation where they can support pollination and insect life more generally.
- We are looking at developing an online resource pack for schools about our water project and the environment.



To learn more about the Affane-Cappoquin/Cappoquin Camogie Club's water project, see their video at <https://learning.gaa.ie/greenclub/casestudies>